

DRAFT NO. 1
July 20, 2007
Prepared by: Board Members
Butch Hodgkins & Teri Rie
Reviewed by: Date:
Scott Morgan
Jay S. Punia
Les Harder
APPROVED FOR FINAL:

Lester A. Snow

Date _____

NOTE: Jim Sandner of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and staff from the Division of Flood Management have coordinated in the drafting of this letter.

Lieutenant General Robert L. Van Antwerp
Commander and Chief of Engineers
United States Army Corps of Engineers
441 G Street, Northwest
Washington, DC 20314-1000

Dear General Antwerp:

The Corps of Engineers (Corps), the California State Reclamation Board (Board), and the Department of Water Resources (DWR) have been flood control partners in providing flood protection in the Central Valley, and are committed to continuing that partnership. The resulting Sacramento and San Joaquin River Flood Control Projects have significantly reduced the frequency of flooding in the Central Valley and helped to make it a desirable place to live.

We are writing to request further assistance in connection with the decision-making process for alterations to existing Corps projects under 33 USC 408. We had previously requested written guidelines (attachment 1) with respect to 408, and appreciate your issuance of the Policy and Procedures Guidance for the Approval of Modification and Alteration of Corps of Engineers Projects dated October 23, 2006. At this time, we hope the Corps will work cooperatively with

the Board and DWR, with the goal of developing specific clarification of the process for projects where the Board is the nonfederal sponsor of the project to be altered, but the project is proposed by other flood control interests. As you may know, record floods in 1986 and 1997, and extensive damage to project features in the moderate 2006 events, have substantially increased public concern about the long term adequacy of current flood control features. As a result of this increased concern, California voters approved \$4.9 billion in flood control bond funds last November to reduce the risks of flooding, much of this targeted to the Central Valley. With this unprecedented funding now available to the State, we expect that many levee repair and improvement projects will proceed in advance of an approved federal project, and will need to be lead by State and regional agencies. This makes the effective application of the Section 408 process extremely critical for timely flood risk reduction.

Specifically, we are requesting that you identify one or more representatives who would represent Headquarters on an ad hoc task force that would include the Sacramento District, South Pacific Division, the California Department of Water Resources, and the Reclamation Board. The task force would produce a Memorandum of Understanding, or similar document, that would help the Board and the local sponsors, who are required to work through the Reclamation Board, understand clearly the steps needed to facilitate an expeditious decision. We have discussed this approach with the Sacramento District and they are supportive of this request.

In connection with this effort, the Board will also seek to have 408 decision-making authorities delegated to the District, and/or the Division, to the extent feasible. We continue to believe that decisions on proposed alterations are most effectively and efficiently handled at the District level due to the District's deep involvement with the State's FloodSafe California program.

The State and the Board are committed to expeditious delivery of improved public safety in response to the voter's wishes, but are also committed to continuing our partnership with the Corps. The Corps' continued assistance in this matter will be greatly appreciated.

If you have questions regarding this request, or require further information, please contact:

Jay S. Punia, General Manager
California State Reclamation Board
3310 El Camino Ave., Room LL40
Sacramento, California 95821

Phone: (916) 574-0609

Thank you in advance for your continued cooperation and assistance.

Sincerely,

Benjamin F. Carter, President

California State Reclamation Board

Lester A. Snow, Director

California Department of Water Resources

cc: (See Attached List).

cc: Major General Don T. Riley
Director of Civil Works
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Brigadier General John R. McMahon
Division Commander
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
South Pacific Division

Ms. Elizabeth Caldwell
U. S. Army Corps of Engineers

Colonel Ronald Light, District Engineer
Sacramento District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Mr. Michael Mahoney, Chief
Construction and Operations Division
Sacramento District

Mr. Jim Sandner, Chief
Operations Technical Division
Sacramento District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Ms. Meegan Nagy, Chief
Emergency Operations
Sacramento District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Ms. Christine Altendorf
Assistant District Engineer
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Ms. Susan Gilson
The National Association of Flood and
Stormwater Management Agencies

Mr. Peter Rabbon, Program Director
National Flood Risk Management Program
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers